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ABSTRACT

This document reports on the Migrant Education Secondary Assistance Project's third and final outreach meeting, conducted in conjunction with the National Migrant Education Conference attended by migrant educators from across the nation. These educators have identified effective preventative strategies such as the elimination of grade retention, counseling, provision of role models, staff training, monitoring student progress, credit and make-up opportunities, and parental involvement. Obstacles to providing successful programs on a national scope include lack of money and resources, lack of communication and coordination of services, and lack of cooperation from schools and communities. Migrant educators have not made dropout retrieval a priority. They need to increase services to dropouts and to address the post-graduate needs of graduating migrant students. Migrant educators are often leaders in the initiation of new trends in education. Among these are the move from remediation to a challenging, but comprehensible, curriculum and the incorporation of more developmental and experiential teaching approaches. New trends indicate a need to provide direct services to the whole family and to include and involve family members in educational decisions. The imperative for migrant education to be effective leads to out-of-school supplementary services that increase the child's total learning time by extending the school day, week, and year. (TES)

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CURRENT PRACTICES: FUTURE DIRECTIONS

OUTREACH REPORT

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CURRENT PRACTICES: FUTURE DIRECTIONS

THIRD OUTREACH MEETING REPORT

Prepared and Written by
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Authorized by
the Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) Project
under a contract from the United States Department of Education,
Office of Migrant Education
to the Florida Department of Education
Federal Compensatory Education

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1989

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The information reported herein was prepared pursuant to a contract with the United States Department of Education. However, the opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Department of Education should be inferred.

PREFACE

The Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) project convened three special "outreach meetings" to give migrant educators an opportunity to explore problems and issues, discuss emerging trends, and share promising secondary education practices. Each of the meetings focused on a particular topic germane to migrant secondary education. The topics included:

Characteristics of Secondary Migrant Students
October 24-26, 1988
Silver Bay, New York

Exploring Mobility Issues
November 14-15, 1988
McAllen, Texas

Current Practices: Future Directions
May 3, 1989
Portland, Oregon

The meetings were held in conjunction with other Migrant Education activities. The first outreach meeting was held in conjunction with the New York State Migrant Education Conference. Special thanks for the logistics go to Ms. Molly Nye and Ms. Pat Ward, conference coordinators. The MESA project was graciously welcomed as part of the conference and included as a special strand. The second meeting was held in conjunction with an interstate counselors' workshop. Representatives from approximately twenty states were able to provide MESA with valuable information regarding mobility issues. MESA's inclusion in the conference was made possible by the support of Mr. Jesse Vela, Director of the Texas Migrant Interstate Program. The third meeting was held at the National Migrant Education Conference in Portland, Oregon. MESA staff thank Ms. Sharon Huck and Mr. Merced Flores, conference coordinators, for including the outreach meeting on the National Conference agenda. The national base of the conference gave migrant educators from across the country the opportunity to participate in the MESA project.

The meetings would not have been possible without Ms. Susan Morse, consultant on interstate programs, for serving as facilitator for the three meetings. She is very skilled at involving participants in the discussions, keeping participants on task and in analyzing information.

The executive summary and outreach meeting report on "Current Practices: Future Directions" are included in this report.

Robert Lynch, Director
BOCES Geneseo Migrant Center

Executive Summary

Current Practices: Future Directions

Collectively migrant educators know what works to prevent migrant youth from dropping out and what is needed to help them learn and graduate successfully.

They have identified effective preventative strategies such as elimination of grade retention; counseling and provision of role models; training for staff; monitoring of student progress, credit make up opportunities and whole child services, including parent involvement.

Obstacles to providing successful programs on a national scope are lack of money and resources, lack of communication and coordination of services, training and lack of cooperation from schools and communities.

Migrant educators have not previously made dropout retrieval a priority, due to lack of funds and resources and/or ignorance of effective retrieval programs. They need to increase services to dropouts, and to address the post-graduate preparedness of the migrant student who graduates.

Migrant educators are often leaders in the initiation of new trends in education.

Among these are the move from remediation to a challenging but comprehensible curriculum and the incorporation of more developmental and experiential teaching approaches. New trends indicate a need to provide direct services to the whole family and to include and involve the family in educational decisions made for secondary school level youth.

The imperative for Migrant Education to be effective and truly supplementary leads to out-of-school supplementary services that increase the child's total learning time by extending the school day, week and year.

These are some of the conclusions of the third MESA Outreach Meeting held in Portland, Oregon, which was attended by migrant educators from across the nation.

Current Practices: Future Directions

Third Outreach Meeting
Report

Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) Project

May 3, 1989
Portland, Oregon

The third outreach meeting of the Migrant Education Secondary Assistance (MESA) project was held in conjunction with the 23rd National Migrant Education Conference held in Portland, Oregon, May 1-4, 1989. The three-hour meeting of migrant educators from all over the country addressed current secondary practices and future directions.

The **goals** of the outreach meeting were **to provide an overview of current practices in migrant secondary education, to identify and address issues of concern to migrant educators, and to explore future directions for service to secondary students.**

I. The **Current Practices: Future Directions** meeting began with introductions of the presenters/facilitators: Bob Lynch, MESA Project Coordinator, and Susan Morse, MESA Consultant; and the participants, who were administrators, consultants, counselors, resource specialists, and teachers at the national, state and local levels. The majority were employed by the Migrant Education program.

The first activity was a survey of the participants on the topic of "The Best Thing I've Done This Year!" This topic was introduced to give these secondary school migrant educators an opportunity to share with the group, and for the record, significant strategies, programs or services that they are providing to migrant youth at the secondary level.

Some of the strategies were:

-The development of job opportunities for migrant youth has worked as a dropout prevention strategy and has motivated students to stay in school to learn skills needed for jobs that interest them.

-The training of administrators to understand the needs of migrant youth has resulted in more enthusiasm and support for the program from them.

-Summer residential institutes have a dramatic impact on students (the one described is held in Florida). The Florida Summer Institute offers credit deficient migrant youth the opportunity to earn credit while learning leadership skills, study skills and being exposed to a university environment.

-Mainstreaming of limited English speaking students into more content area classes is helping them feel more a part of the school and encouraging content area teachers to take ownership for these students.

-The policy of involving parents in interviews for Migrant Education staff had been instituted in one region of New York with very positive results. (This policy has also been instituted as part of the Education Code for Migrant Education Program services in California.)

-The use of alternative resources to serve migrant secondary students during the summer program has helped to alleviate budget pressures.

-A dropout prevention program which has proven effective was shared. It includes the monitoring of student progress at the high school, combined with communication with parents, and counseling services for students and families about student progress. This has helped to reduce the dropout rate and increase school attendance.

-An increase in school/community transition programs is resulting in more options for migrant youth.

-Interagency coordination has brought more services to migrant students, dropouts and their families.

-Cooperative learning has been added to the tutorial model so that students are taught to work and study in small groups and to assist one another.

II. **Overview/Purpose:** This section consisted of discussion of the purpose of the outreach meeting as well as the process and content of the rest of the session.

III. **What Do We Know Right Now?** The MESA staff provided the participants with a progress report on the tasks of the MESA project.

What has MESA found out? Bob Lynch provided a concise review of the major tasks and products of the project as well as the services and resources that MESA can provide to the state programs. Bob discussed some of the components of the project that should be of benefit to practitioners including: 1) the outreach meetings and follow-up reports, 2) the MESA Bulletin, 3) the state profiles of services to secondary school-aged migrant youth, 4) the 15 dropout retrieval program descriptions, 5) the dropout expert interviews, and 6) the Credit Accrual and Acceptance Manual. Mary Fink and Anne Salerno, MESA Migrant Education Specialists, discussed details of the tasks and results of the research conducted for the project. They also described the annotated bibliography, summarized some of the interesting results of the interviews with migrant educators and answered questions about the project and future dissemination of materials.

What Works for Secondary Students? was a brainstorming activity. Participants began by defining secondary students as 6th graders (about aged 11) through 21 year olds, in or out of school, for the purposes of the discussion. We also included district and Migrant Education supplemental programs in the discussion of what works. The participants agreed on the goal and began to list program components they know to be effective.

Goal: to assist migrant students to graduate/ to offer choices and opportunities.

Components that work:

Preventative Strategies-

Elimination of grade retention
Double promotion of retained students with follow-up support

Role models/ Counseling-

Student Recognition Conference (TX)
Life Management Skills Leadership Training retreat (TX)

Group counseling (on-going/pulled out from different classes)
Developing support groups/clubs
Alcohol and drug counseling
Paraprofessional advisors/role models assigned to high school students or dropouts

Staff Training/Instruction-

Training of student teachers in colleges and teachers (inservice) to be aware of needs and culture of migrant students
Training in effective teaching practices for LEP students
Primary language instruction/teaching in the native language

Credit Make-Up Opportunities

Availability of P.A.S.S. to migrant secondary students as a means of credit make-up.
P.A.S.S. interstate coordination for maximum credit acceptance
P.A.S.S. Assist used for credit completion
Interstate credit coordination between schools, districts, and Migrant programs
Credit for ESL (core credit- for required courses)
G.R.A.S.P./G.E.D. correspondence / Bilingual G.E.D. (Spanish) available to students who are too old, behind in credits or unlikely to finish a regular high school program.

Parent Involvement/Whole Child Services

Parent involvement on site: in homes, at the camps
School-teacher coordination

Services to Dropouts

MSRTS flag at G.E.D. or Diploma for 17 through 21 year olds
Active recruiting and retrieving of dropouts
Dropout liaison/outreach staff

Effective dropout referral

Post-Secondary Opportunities

High school to college communication resulting in increased enrollment and success in post-secondary educational programs

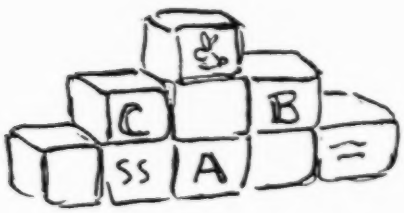
IV. New Trends in Migrant Secondary School Education

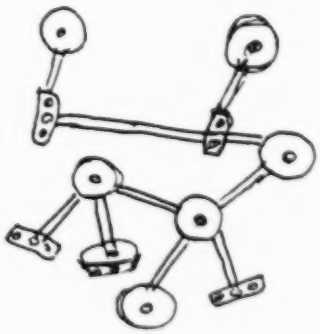
Staff and trainers of interstate programs have the unique opportunity to learn about innovative practices, and trends that are beginning throughout the country. Some of these were shared with the participants.

Learning Theories: Moving Away from Remediation:

The effect of the building block model of learning theory is that it frequently prevents teachers from offering higher level thinking activities, as well as new skills until students have mastered all the lower ones. This approach is often used as the justification for grade retention, or for keeping migrant students in remedial programs for extended periods.

Newer learning theories describe the brain and the learning process as more like a tinker toy than building blocks with learning moving in a variety of directions simultaneously. This approach argues that most academic skills are not as dependent on lower level learning as we might think, and that by continuing with new material a student will be challenged and will pick up most of the omitted skills in the process. Migrant students may have spotty academic learning, but they also have a lot of experiential learning and need challenges and new and relevant material to motivate them to want to learn.





Whole Family Services

Educators of high-risk students are agreeing that whatever programs are developed for these students they must take into consideration the whole family and the non-academic needs of the child. Since the family is the primary educator of the child, the family must be included in the formal education process. Studies on successful minorities cite parent involvement as one of the principal positive influences on these students. This includes parent education, learning in the home, parent-child activities, and close school-parent communication.

Affective and Experiential Education

Another point shared was the importance of affective learning to the success of migrant students. At the high school level more of the identified needs of migrant students fall into the affective category than in the cognitive realm. These affective needs, if not met, can block cognitive learning. For example, a student with low self-esteem, who feels excluded from peers for reasons of poverty, language, etc. may not be able to concentrate and learn in school.

The need for the experiential approach to teaching which uses real experiences as a basis for learning has proven to be extremely successful with migrant students.

Supplementary Designs

There was discussion of the importance of assuring that Migrant Education services are supplementary to the base program. Pulling students out of a classroom and away from credentialed teacher time, appears to be more of a depletion model than a supplementary model, for the child actually receives less credentialed teacher time instead of more.

Extended Day/Year

Truly supplemental programs will be provided beyond the regular school program. Some Migrant Education programs now provide academic instruction only in the morning before school, during lunch, or after school when they are not being offered by the school. In this way the Migrant Education program is not taking students out of academic programs and away from credentialed teachers during school hours. In addition these migrant programs

offer in-home learning programs, and instruction during weekends, vacations, and the summer. School day activities are supplementary activities not offered by the school including health services to families, consultations with teachers and administrators, and training and assistance to school staff.

Post-Secondary Options

Now that the Migrant Education program is experiencing some success in increasing the rate of graduation of migrant students, a new issue must be addressed -- the low representation of migrant students in post-secondary educational institutions. Migrant staff and students are woefully ignorant of the options for migrant youth in terms of post-secondary opportunities and funding. We need to extend our expectations of migrant youth to continue beyond high school, and we need to provide more training to staff on options for migrant youth in institutions of higher learning as well as vocational training programs.

V. **Burning Issues/Obstacles** *(suggested solutions in italics)*

This list was compiled as issues were brought up throughout the training. The list was reviewed at the end of the session. Some issues had already been discussed and resolved in another context, in some cases participants had suggestions, and others still required further action. Participants were encouraged to do whatever possible to resolve the issues, rather than wait for others to take action.

*Money problems resulting in cuts to summer program services, -*Cooperation among schools*

*Tracking of students to help provide appropriate services (language /needs) -*use MSRTS information*

*The "mission" of the local high school is sometimes in conflict with the needs of migrant students *more advocacy*

*Access to alternative high school programs in or out of school is limited -*linkages/coordination of programs - more funding for alternatives by districts*

*Non-schooled students need more services -*HEP/GED/PASS*

*Non English speaking students also need more services and

there are not enough (or no) bilingual teachers to serve them -*ESL does not require bilingual teachers. These teachers should be used for first language instruction/bilingual paraprofessional advisors may be available where credentialed teachers are not, to meet some of the affective needs.*

*Undocumented students -*there should not be any difference in services at the school site. Post-secondary funding may be limited to schools with private endowments available for scholarships to these students*

*Substance abuse (bilingual services are needed) -*supplementary counseling by paraprofessionals, group counseling, parent involvement*

*Poor attendance affects students success, family support to keep students in school may be lacking -*appropriate district policies are needed to account for migrancy and work pressures*

*Where there is no district program, Migrant Education programs are pressured to use funds for base programs, i.e., ESL, bilingual services, language testing, competency test remediation.

*Lack of preparedness by staff (district) to help migrant students / needs assessments are necessary

*A total program improvement plan for the district that addresses needs of migrant students is needed

*Migrant supplemental (funds) to year-round schools: what are some effective models?

*Programs that serve the whole family are needed

*Needs of non-migrant, but similar students are also not being met -*state-funded bilingual programs/ cooperative district funding*

VI. **RECOMMENDATIONS--**

Although many recommendations were provided throughout the sessions and can be found in the text of this report, these specific ones were provided by the participants at the conclusion of the final session.

1. Increase training of teachers and counselors
2. Coordinate with universities to increase admission, scholarships, and success of migrant students in post-secondary programs
3. Develop job bank, career ladders and other career services for Migrant Education staff to increase job satisfaction,

opportunities, and numbers of former migrants in the program.

4. Encourage that two languages be required in high school and that credit be awarded for Spanish competency.
5. Promote/ provide more role models for migrant youth
6. Lobby/ advocate for more money and support to meet the needs of migrant students
7. Increase use of trained paraprofessional advisors/advocates at the high school level to help high school students and provide outreach and services to dropouts

Summary of the training—

The participants of this Outreach Meeting were extremely well informed about the needs of secondary school migrant youth, and they were extremely concerned about the need for increased services to both secondary students and dropouts.

They felt that greater emphasis must be placed on meeting the needs of secondary aged youth, including youth through the age of 21. They acknowledged that many of the problems these youth experience may stem from conditions that begin in the early years, but they also pointed out that part of the work of the Migrant Education program is to meet present needs, and to respond to a population that is mobile and therefore arrives at each site with immediate needs. To say that these needs might have been better met ten years earlier is a moot point. Effective long term educational strategies are really the responsibility of the school districts.

Due to their migrancy, these youth are in great and immediate need of guidance, counseling, social services and referral as well as of academic assistance to ensure that they are able to become successful and contributing members of society.